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"From the language of Ministers, I am to conclude, that the Volunteer System, whether right or wrong, is now fixed, and incapable of being altered. But, I insist, that it is not fixed, and that it must on the contrary, and infallibly will, at no distant period, come again under revision. It is with a view to that period, that these observations are made. The defects of this system will never suffer it to go on long as it is. I wish, therefore, that before the time, to which I now look forward, gentlemen would be prepared with their opinions on the several parts of the measure; would consider how far the objections are valid; how far the parts objected to may be corrected or got rid of; and, failing of that, whether the whole system will not require to be new cast, and, in a great degree, possibly, to be done away."—*Mr. Hindham's Speech on the Volunteer Exemption Bill. Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, December 14, 1803.*

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AN

ANALYTICAL AND COMPARATIVE VIEW

Of two pamphlets, lately published, the one entitled, "Cursory Remarks upon the State of Parties, during the administration of Mr. Addington, by a NEAR OBSERVER;" and the other entitled, "A Plain Answer to the misrepresentations and calumnies contained in the Cursory Remarks of a Near Observer, by A MORE ACCURATE OBSERVER."

(Continued from p. 72.)

The parliamentary conduct of LORD GRENVILLE is now to be examined. The Near Observer, which, the reader will bear in mind, is the name assumed by the partisan of the present Treasury, begins his attack upon his lordship's conduct by endeavouring to persuade the world, that his opposition to the peace was unjustifiable, because he himself had proposed *similar terms of peace*, during the negotiations at Lisle. But, the prefatory remarks must first be noticed. "The retreat," says he, "of the late ministers, was regarded, both by the government of France and the neutral powers of the continent, as a virtual confession of the inability of the country to persist in the war, so that, they had the misfortune to retire, and the new servants of the crown to succeed under the imputation, that the former possessed no ability of making peace, and the latter no means of continuing the war. It was even believed that the late minister had been long divided upon this point, an opinion which subsequent events appear to have justified." It is not necessary to contradict this gross and shameful falsehood, but it would not be right to transcribe it without bestowing on it a mark of reprobation. "Under these fatal impressions" (continues the hireling of the well-meaning, candid

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ministry,) "under these fatal impressions of the public mind, both at home and abroad, was Lord Hawkesbury obliged to submit to the first overtures of a treaty, which appeared to all men almost impossible to be obtained upon any terms short of ruin and disgrace." I am forcibly stopped again here, to ask every true and honest man, who remembers the state and feeling of the country in the month of April, 1801, just after the battle of Copenhagen, whether the slave of the well-meaning ministry has not here promulgated another most gross and shameful falsehood? Whether, on the 14th of April, 1801, the very day on which London was illuminated in honour of the deeds of our fleet in the Sound; whether, on that day, the day on which Lord Hawkesbury * gave in his first projet, it did really "appear to all men almost impossible for England to obtain peace upon any terms short of ruin and disgrace?" The Near Observer proceeds: "It is fresh in the recollection of the public, that, upon the peace, a difference of sentiment immediately appeared amongst the late ministers, so serious and important as not only to confirm the opinion of there having long existed a schism in their cabinet upon that question, but to make it appear for ever impossible for them to act again in any political union whatsoever." This has constantly been the course of the Addingtons. DIVIDE AND GOVERN, is their maxim; a maxim upon which they have steadily acted, and the folly, the selfishness, the ambition, and the blind animosity of others have most efficiently favoured

* The first overture for a parley was made by Lord Hawkesbury, on the 21st of March; but, the first mention of terms was made on the 14th of April the day after the news of the victory of Copenhagen was received.—For proof of these facts, as well as for a specimen of diplomatic prostration, see the authentic papers, Register, Vol. III, pp. 1179, 1180, 1181, and 1183.

their views. Was there ever before heard of such an impudent sort of reasoning: because the members of the late cabinet differed widely in opinion, as to the peace made by their successors, we are to conclude, not only that there had *long* been a schism in that cabinet, but that it is impossible for them *ever* again to act together for any political end whatsoever; and, in a subsequent part of the pamphlet, we are told, that it would be "scandalous" and "profligate" in them so to unite, save and except it were for the righteous purpose of supporting the Addingtons and Hawkesburys: in *that case*, the end would sanctify the means!

We now come to the passage relative to the negotiations at Lisle. "The unfortunate negotiations at Lisle," says the *Near Observer*, "confined and circumscribed every projet or overture the new ministers could hazard. Could Mr. Addington propose terms less favourable to Buonaparté, than Lord Grenville had offered to Barras and Reubell? Would France, now that one half of the Continent lay prostrate at her foot, by the Treaty of Luneville; *mistress of Egypt*; and *stirring up a confederation of Kings from the bosom of the North*, accept conditions less glorious or profitable, than we had offered her at the moment of one of her revolutions, while the powers of Europe were unbroken, and ready to renew the war at our side? The projet of Lisle, therefore, was a circle, out of which the successors of Lord Grenville could not tread."

The answer, which the *Accurate Observer* has made as to this point, is as follows: "I cannot agree, that France was *mistress of Egypt*, during our negotiation at Amiens; nor, if I did, could I consider it as a reason why we should have accepted less advantageous terms. Neither can the 'confederation of kings' 'from the bosom of the north' be justly stated as placing us under a disadvantage in that negotiation, for that confederation may be considered as having been dissolved by the glorious victory at Copenhagen, obtained a very few days after the first overtures for peace were made. As little can I agree that we were entitled to more favourable terms than those which we were willing to have accepted from France at Lisle, because (it is said) we treated 'at the moment of one of her revolutions.' The terms were offered *previous* to the revolution alluded to of the 4th September,

1797. It was that revolution which *broke off* the negotiation. Instead of the powers of Europe 'being ready to renew the war at our side' they appeared to have deserted us. The Treaty of Leoben* had been signed, and that of Campo Formio was about to be concluded. The *stoppage of the Bank* had created consternation and embarrassment, and the *mutiny in the fleet* had spread around us general despondency. The circumstances and situation of the country were totally different at the periods of our negotiations at Lisle and at Amiens, and that difference was certainly not in favour of the former period. I cannot see therefore, why the 'basis of the Treaty of Amiens,' is to be considered as necessarily 'traced at Lisle,' or why 'the projet of Lord Grenville' 'was a circle out of which his successors' 'could not tread.' These assertions are made chiefly to prove the inconsistency of Lord Grenville in offering the projet and in disapproving the Treaty. From this charge he exculpated himself very ably and successfully on the discussion of that treaty."

So far the *Accurate Observer* is perfectly right; but his refutation is by no means so clear as his facts would have enabled him to make it. Lord Hawkesbury's negotiation with France began, as I have already stated, on the 14th of April: then, and not till then, was the first proposition made. The news of the battle of the 21st of March, when Gen. Abercrombie was killed, when the "Invincible Standard" was taken by Lutz, and when the fate of Egypt was, in a great measure, decided; this news had not, indeed, been received when the first projet was delivered in by Lord Hawkesbury; but, it was soon afterwards received, and the complete reduction of the French force was expected to take place, it did actually take place, and the news of that reduction was received in France, at least, before the preliminaries were signed. And, to prove, that, even at the time when the first proposition was made, the expedition to Egypt was *not* regarded as being "totally incompetent to its object;" to prove that its success was *not* contrary to "all human computation and probability;" to prove that the final conquest of that country from the French was *not* "the consequence of a series of *unhoped* for victories," the *Accurate Observer* might have

* The Treaty of Leoben was signed 18th April, that of Campo Formio 17th Oct. 1797.

quoted the words of Lord Hawkesbury's own projet, which, as I have said before, was delivered into Mr. Otto on the 14th of April, some weeks *before* news was received of the victory of the 21st of March. "If," says the projet, "authentic information should be received, previous to the signing of the preliminaries, of the *evacuation of Egypt* by the French troops, or of a *convention concluded to that effect*, his Majesty will not hold himself bound to subscribe to the above conditions in all their extent *." If this was the language of ministers previous to the news of the victory of Alexandria; if this was their language at the beginning of the negotiation, is it consistent with *candour* for them now to assert, that, to the end of that negotiation, France was considered as the "*mistress of Egypt*?"

With regard to France having "stirred up a confederation of kings from the bosom of the North," the Accurate Observer truly states, that the confederation, if it was one, might be considered as dissolved by the battle of Copenhagen, the intelligence of which was received *before* Lord Hawkesbury made his first proposition to Mr. Otto; but, if it was not dissolved on the 14th of April, it surely was completely dissolved by the death of the Emperor Paul, and by the Convention, the much boasted convention with Russia, which was concluded on the 5th of June, 1801, four months *before* the preliminaries of peace were signed, and several weeks *before* Lord Hawkesbury receded from his first proposition. What pretence, therefore, is there for classing the "confederation of kings" amongst the dangers, which the ministers had to encounter in a continuation of the war? What pretence is there for citing the state of Egypt and the dispute with the Northern powers as circumstances that rendered our situation in 1801 worse than our situation in 1797, when the battles of Aboukir and of Camperdown were, as yet, not won; when, of course, the enemy's maritime power was, as yet, considerable, and when there was actually a mutiny in our fleet? What resemblance is there between the circumstances of the two epochs; and what pretence is there, then, for saying, that "the projet of Lisle was a circle out of which Lord Hawkesbury could not tread?"

Lord Grenville fully proved the falsehood of assertions of this sort, in his speech of the 3d of November, 1801. But, indeed, none but

the basest of advocates, pleading to the basest of tribunals, would have attempted such a mode of defence. How was Lord Hawkesbury bound by the projet of Lord Grenville? It was a hundred times acknowledged by the late ministry, that the rupture of the negotiations at Lisle was a fortunate circumstance: and, yet a projet delivered in during that negotiation was to be a circle out of which their successors could not tread! Besides, how happens it, that, the other plans of the late ministry did not become circles out of which their successors could not tread? How came those successors to have *boasted*, even in the very pamphlet before us, of acting upon principles and in a mode diametrically opposed to the principles and modes of their predecessors? How, for instance, came Lord Hawkesbury to solicit an interview with a Commissary of Prisoners, so contrary to the practice of Lord Grenville; and how came he, at once, to assume a supplicating tone better suited to a petty dependent republic than to the King of Great-Britain? How came his partisans to *boast* of this shameful act of degradation? And how came the stock-jobbers to applaud him to the skies? The projet at Lisle, though made under circumstances such as we have seen, and though *never justified* by any body, but upon the ground of hard necessity; that projet retained the Cape as well as Ceylon; it secured Portugal from loss either in commerce, in money, or in territory; it provided a real and complete indemnity for the Prince of Orange; it made no sacrifice of any ally of Great-Britain; whereas the peace of the Addingtons and Hawkesburies has sacrificed them all, and has left us not a friend upon the face of the earth. But, after all, and to conclude this part of the examination with a fact, which seems to have been entirely overlooked by every body, the projet of Lisle was never taken into consideration in the negotiations of either the preliminary or definitive treaty. The First Consul of France, with a frankness which really does honour to himself, and which has certainly done much good to his cause, has published the whole of the papers relative to both these negotiations; and, from one end to the other of these papers, the projet of Lisle, the projet which was "a circle out of which Lord Hawkesbury *could not tread*," is never dwelt upon, it is never referred to, nay, it is never so much as once *mentioned*, or even *alluded to*, by either of the parties! *

* All these papers are correctly inserted in the Register, Vol. III. from p. 1179 to 1208, and from 1257 to 1290.

* See Register, Vol. III. p. 1181.

And, yet the slave of the candid Addingtons has been instructed to tell us, that it was a circle out of which they could not tread! Thanks to Buonaparté, we are now made acquainted with what was so sedulously hidden from us: we now know, that the project of Lisle, which was, in both Houses of Parliament, described as the insurmountable obstacle to a peace, such as the New Opposition contended for, was never so much as brought into view, during the whole course of the negotiation.

The next point, on which the Addingtons have misrepresented Lord Grenville, is, *the language made use of by his lordship in speaking of the conduct of the ministry.* "Notwithstanding," say they, "that, so early as the treaty concluded with the Court of St. Petersburg, 5th June, 1801, the great talents of Lord Grenville had been employed upon a speech and a pamphlet, in which he endeavoured to oppose, discredit, and censure with every species of *acrimony* and *contempt*, those ministers, to whom he had so lately engaged his 'constant, active, and zealous support,' the public were astonished at his censure of the preliminaries of peace." Before I remark on what is advanced here and in other parts of the pamphlet as to the language of Lord Grenville, I must contradict the falsehood, which I have just transcribed, and which has been passed over in silence by the *More Accurate Observer*. It is said, that "so early as the Convention with Russia, the 5th of June, 1801, Lord Grenville's talents had been employed upon a speech and a pamphlet, &c." Now, *before* the Convention with Russia was ratified, Parliament had *adjourned*; that Convention never was laid before Parliament till the next November; and the speech made by Lord Grenville on the subject, which speech he afterwards published in a pamphlet, was not delivered till the 13th of November, ten days *after* the discussion of the preliminaries of peace! The object of this falsehood evidently is, to bring the commencement of his lordship's opposition as near as possible to the time, when it is pretended he gave an unconditional promise of "constant, active, and zealous support;" and, it is an object by no means unworthy of the *well-meaning* Addingtons and Hawkesburies.*

* This act of foul aggression, on the part of the Addingtons and Hawkesburies, authorizes, and even calls for, the relation of an anecdote, which, though I have often had sufficient provocation, I have hitherto forbore to communicate to the public.—

As to the "*acrimony* and *contempt*," with which his lordship is said to have treated the ministers in his speech on the Russian Convention, the speech itself, published

Very soon after the Convention of St. Petersburg was concluded, a pamphlet was prepared in defence of it. This pamphlet was entitled, "A Vindication of the Convention, lately concluded between Great-Britain and Russia, in six letters, addressed to ———." It was published *before* the meeting of Parliament, and was obviously intended to prepossess the public mind against every objection that should be urged to the compact which it was intended to vindicate. So far, perhaps, there was little to find fault with. But, who will believe, that this pamphlet, which was, to all intents and purposes a ministerial publication, and which was *paid for out of the public money*, contained a deliberate, high-wrought eulogium on Lord Hawkesbury, who was held forth as his country's *best-hope*, and as possessing all the talents, all the coolness, all the wisdom, all the *statesman-like virtues* of his "*noble Sire*;" who will believe, that this pamphlet was written under the *dictation* of that "*noble Sire*" himself? When I say *dictation*, I do not mean, that the pamphlet was written at the *suggestion* of Lord Liverpool; I do not mean to say, that he furnished the *hints*; but I mean to say, that with his own lips, he dictated the statements, the opinions, the arguments, and the very words of it; and, I have further to say, that his lordship and Lord Hawkesbury himself read, and, in some instances, corrected, the proof sheets! The proof sheets of a pamphlet, which contained a fulsome eulogium upon themselves, and which they and their under officers assisted to circulate, and that, too, at the *public expense*!—But, this is not all. The *well-meaning* Jenkinson chose to attribute the pamphlet to a Mr. Ireland, Vicar of Croydon, in Surrey. Under his auspices it went to the press, and, out of the proceeds (which came *principally from the Treasury*) he received a *sum of money*. Whether it was for *this* or some other great public service; whether for this or some other act of disinterested patriotism and loyalty; whether it was for his politics or his piety, I know not, but Mr. Ireland soon after became a Doctor of Divinity and a *Prebend of Westminster*.—This part of the anecdote relative to Dr. Ireland I should have suppressed; but, since the Doctor has thought proper to introduce, with great officiousness, into the library of the reading

from his own notes, may be consulted; and, if in that edition of it, or in any report of it which has been made in the newspapers, or elsewhere, one single phrase can be found to warrant the charge here brought against it, I will allow the Near Observer to have been the instrument of fair and honourable men. That speech will be read with pleasure and will convey instruction; it will serve as a guide to future statesmen; it will be consulted as one of the works on the public law of Europe; long, very long, after the persons, *all* the persons, who made the disgraceful instrument which called it forth, shall have sunk into the oblivion of contempt, or shall be remembered only in the

Society of his Parish, a work, the sole object and tendency of which is to *misrepresent, calumniate, and vilify* Lord Grenville, Mr. Windham, and every other person who has stood conspicuously forward in opposition to the measures, by which the present ministers have steeped the country in disgrace; since the Rev. Doctor has made this use of the influence which he possesses over his parishioners, it is fitting that those parishioners, as well as the whole kingdom, should be made acquainted with such circumstances as may serve to elucidate the motives which have given rise to the zeal that he displays against the opponents of ministers. It must not be objected to my complaint against Doctor Ireland, that he has not the power to *prevent* the publication in question from being circulated by the reading Society of his parish; because *he himself purchased the pamphlet for the Society.* The publication, which I first met with in the house of one of his parishioners, is entitled "*Elements of Opposition*;" it was published by the same bookseller who published the *Cursory Remarks*; it consists of *garbled* passages from my writings and from the speeches of the New Opposition members, together with comments calculated to *pervert* the meaning of the text, and to misrepresent the conduct, to disfigure the motives, and to defame the character of the persons spoken of, whose *private* as well as public actions are most falsely and basely misrepresented. Such is the work, which Doctor Ireland has circulated, and is yet circulating, amongst his parishioners. How far he does, in this instance, act in conformity with the dictates of that superior piety, by which the adherents of the *well-meaning* ministry profess to be governed, I shall not attempt to determine; but, I hope, he will be able to find some leaf, some little morsel of blank paper,

execrations of Englishmen. I *heard* that speech; and, well do I recollect the real candour, the gentleness, the mercy, the compassion, with which his lordship treated his opponents; but, not one word did I hear, not a look or gesture did I see, expressive of "*acrimony or contempt.*"—In another part of his pamphlet, the Near Observer renews the charge relative to Lord Grenville's *language.* "*It would not,*" says he, "*be doing even the little justice I am able, to the subject I am treating of, if I were to omit, that the style and language of opposition was much degenerated in the new hands to which it had transferred itself. The late minority, though it had been treated as a low contemptible faction of levellers and jacobins, never dealt in abuse and incivility so largely as the great aristocracy which had now succeeded to their place. Absurd, incapable, and grosser epithets were liberally applied to his Majesty's councils and ministers, and by no member of either House more frequently than by Lord Grenville.*" Again, in another part, he speaks of "*the aggressive and unrelenting opposition, the asperity, malevolence, and rancour, of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, since the failure of THEIR negotiation in April last.*" As far as relates to Lord Grenville, was there ever any thing so de-

in the dull and vile pamphlet alluded to, whereon to write these few words, for the information of the people of Croydon: "*Mr. Cobbett, who is so frequently mentioned in the enclosed pages, has written many pamphlets in defence of his King and of his countrymen, in vindication of the character, the conduct, the laws and the rights of England; of these pamphlets he has circulated more than half a million, in a foreign land; and, never did he ask for, or did he accept of, a sum of money, no, nor of one penny, from any ministry or any government. Mr. Cobbett is a Surrey man; and, he wishes those amongst whom he was born, and in the participation of the hardest of whose labours his youth was spent, to know, that he never has pocketed of their earnings one single farthing, in the whole course of his life.*" To this Doctor Ireland may add, that I have known the whole history of *his* pamphlet for *more than two years*, and that the facts came to my knowledge under no promise of secrecy, either expressed or *implied.* Let him add this, and then leave his parishioners to make a comparison between my character and his:

testably base as this latter insinuation? Of this I shall speak more fully, after I have examined the charges of *using gross language*, and of pursuing the course of *unrelenting opposition*.

But, previously, let us hear, as to the first of these charges, the *defence* of Lord Grenville which the Accurate Observer has had the goodness to make. "The use of expressions," says he, "more harsh and severe than the occasion justifies, on which they are applied, is *always objectionable*. It always manifests ill-humour, and *always bad taste*. But, it is an evil which carries its own remedy along with it; for, it tends more to defeat than to forward the purpose it is meant to promote." The reader will readily acknowledge, that all this is very true, but he will hardly believe that this is the "*answer*," which a More Accurate Observer has given to this part of the misrepresentations and calumnies of the Near Observer. The charge is not *denied*; and, the Answerer merely adds to what I have last quoted, that the Near Observer uses *fouler* language than Lord Grenville, and Mr. Sheridan still *fouler* than either of them, though that gentleman stands high in the opinion of, and has even the honour to be praised by, the great and noble Mr. Henry Addington. But, as a defence of Lord Grenville, this amounts to nothing; and, therefore, the readers of the Accurate Observer are, as to this point, at least, left to believe, that his lordship's conduct cannot be defended, a belief which they will the more readily adopt as the language of Mr. Sheridan seems to have been introduced for the sole purpose of furnishing a palliative comparison. And, was this acting the part of one, who undertook to answer misrepresentations and calumnies? Could not the Accurate Observer have denied, as I now positively deny, that Lord Grenville has ever, during the whole course of his present opposition, made use, in parliament, of language unbecoming his rank and character? Could not the Accurate Observer have challenged his opponent to produce proof of a single instance of the contrary? Could not the Accurate Observer, because Lord Grenville's censures were bestowed on a measure which Mr. Pitt approved of; for this reason was it, that Mr. Long could not find in his heart to allow, that "*absurd*" and "*incapable*" were *not* epithets "more harsh and severe than the occasion justified?"

The charge of pursuing "a systematic *unrelenting* opposition" has been frequently made against Lord Grenville and

his friends; but, in support of this charge nothing like proof has ever been produced, though the More Accurate Observer appears to have flinched from the task of making a defence. The Near Observer has, however, some associates in the preferring of this accusation against Lord Grenville, namely, the two reverend and sapient gentlemen, who are the editor's of that epitome of all that's stupid and all that's slavish, commonly called "*The British Critic*," in which work for the month of December last, they have published what they term a *review* of the Plain Answer of a More Accurate Observer, which "*review*" consists of a *page and a half* of unconnected superficial observation, written, apparently, with no other view than that of obtaining or preserving the patronage of Mr. Addington, without abandoning the chance of again profiting from the patronage of Mr. Pitt. In this pursuit Lord Grenville is, of course, given up. Speaking of the statement, which the Accurate Observer has given of *the terms*, on which Lord Grenville promised ministers his support, these "*reviewers*" say: "Although even these terms must be understood with some qualification, we cannot help thinking, that so *early*, so *vehement*, and so *systematic* an opposition (commencing, if we mistake not, even *before* the peace of Amiens) was hardly compatible with this" [Lord Grenville's] "*declaration*" [made in the House of Lords on the 20th of March, 1801], "*not* could have been justified by any measures of government, but such as should have been *manifestly corrupt in their motive*, or *alarmingly dangerous in their tendency*." It is a newly discovered doctrine, that opposition to ministers, that even strong and persevering opposition, is not to be made, unless their measures are "*manifestly corrupt in their motive*, or *alarmingly dangerous in their tendency*." But, leaving this point, as matter of opinion, to the judgment of the reader, let me ask these Reverend Critics, whether they think, that any two pupils from the school of the much-abused Jesuits could have framed a sentence better calculated to deceive the reader, without a positive falsehood on the part of the writer, than the sentence which I have here quoted from their work? "*So early, so vehement, and so systematic an opposition.*" *How early, how vehement, and how systematic*, they do not say. If they "*mistake not*," however, this vehement and systematic opposition began *before* the peace of Amiens. And, will they contend, that it was *possible* for them to make a mistake as to this fact? Will any



man in England believe, that they did not well know, that Lord Grenville never opposed the ministers during the session of parliament which ended on the 2d of July, 1801? Is it not within the recollection of every one, that his lordship and all his former colleagues supported the new ministers to the end of that session? Is it not equally notorious, that the next session *began* with the discussions on the peace with France? Is it not evident, then, that the opposition of Lord Grenville *could* not "commence before the peace?" And, again I ask, will any man believe, that the Editor's of the British Critic were ignorant of this fact? But, they will say, perhaps, that the preliminary treaty was not the peace of *Amiens*, and, it is the peace of Amiens, of which they speak, as having taken place subsequent to the commencement of Lord Grenville's opposition! Nay, reader, start not! I assure you they are very capable of attempting to take shelter under a subterfuge like this; and though, in such an attempt, they would be puzzled to account for the phrase, "if we mistake not;" yet are they not men to be disconcerted. For the persons who have written and published a "review" of the pamphlets of the Near and Accurate Observer to affect ignorance as to the fact *whether Lord Grenville opposed the preliminary treaty, or not*, would, I am aware, require no moderate stock of brass; but, I am also aware, that it is no moderate stock of that commodity which these gentlemen possess. In short, their remark, which I have above quoted, clearly means, and it was clearly intended to mean, and to convey to the mind of the reader, that Lord Grenville's opposition to the ministers was not only *vehement* and *systematic* from the beginning, but that it began even *before* the ministers made peace with France; than which a more barefaced falsehood never was uttered, much less published under the sanction of two Reverend Divines*. The truth is, that neither Lord

* These Divines are Messrs. Nares and Beloe, whose titles and offices I shall not attempt to describe, seeing that they possess benefice upon benefice till they really swallow up as much as would well maintain ten country clergymen and their families. Neither as critics should I think of characterizing them, were it not, that, as their work is yet read, probably, by seven or eight hundred persons, amongst whom there may be some of the readers of the Register, it becomes, perhaps, my duty, to furnish a standard whereby men may be able to estimate the value of those opinions, which are, par-

Grenville, nor any one of the New Opposition, has ever made a systematic opposition to the ministers. Have the persons composing this party ever, since the present ministers came into power, opposed a tax? Have they ever, except in an instance too glaring to be passed over, availed themselves of any of the numerous opportunities for opposing and exposing the minister upon subjects of finance? Have they ever uttered a word against the granting of the enormous supplies which he has called for? Did they oppose him upon the important questions of armament, or of war? Have they opposed

ticularly on political topics, promulgated in the pages of the British Critic; and, this I shall do by the relation of a fact, which I am positively certain these fathers in literature as well as religion will not deny. This is it:—Just after the appearance of the first edition of Mr. Walter Boyd's pamphlet on bank-notes, the Critics in question regarded it, or, at least, they declared that it was, *unanswerable*, and that it was "*in vain to endeavour to argue against it*." (I use their very words, I believe.) But, in a few days afterwards, they received a summons from the Treasury, whence they were supplied with such *arguments*, that, when their next reviewing pamphlet appeared, not only was Mr. Boyd's pamphlet found *not* to be "*unanswerable*;" not only was it *answered*, but the author was treated rather roughly for having written it! In speaking of *arguments* supplied by the Treasury, I wish to be literally understood. Their "*review*," as it was, of course called, of Mr. Boyd's pamphlet was *actually furnished them from the Treasury*; and, though the opinions it contained were *diametrically the reverse* of those which the Reverend Critics had expressed, after having read the work, they very docilely inserted it in their review pamphlet, and published it to the world *as their own*!—Many gentlemen are, as well by the extraordinary church preferment of these critics as by their confident and pompous manner of writing; many gentlemen, particularly in the country, possessing ten times the knowledge and talents of Messrs. Nares and Beloe, are, by these means imposed upon; but, it is to be presumed, that the fact here related, in pointing out the sort of merit in which these reverend persons surpass the rest of their brethren, will embolden their readers to judge for themselves, and no longer rely, without examination, on statements such as that which I have above quoted respecting the conduct of Lord Grenville.

any augmentation of force, by land or by sea? Have they not, in short, on all occasions, gone before the ministry in demanding resources and authority to be deposited in his Majesty's hands, or, in other words, in the hands of the ministry; that ministry whose slaves are now instructed to revile them for making a "systematic and unrelenting opposition?" How profligate, then, must be the writer, who has not scrupled to assert, that Lord Grenville "has uniformly and undistinguishingly condemned and opposed every measure of Mr. Addington's administration?" And where shall we find words to characterize those, who have employed this writer and circulated his work?

There remains only one falsehood, to which it is necessary to advert, namely, that the opposition of Lord Grenville arose, in a great measure, from *his disappointment at not being admitted into the cabinet in April last.* The Near Observer, in one part of his pamphlet, attributes the opinion which Lord Grenville gave in his speech of the 23d of November, 1802, that Mr. Pitt was the only man capable of saving the country; this opinion the Treasury slave attributes to a previous agreement made between Lord Grenville and Mr. Pitt, according to which agreement the former was to be "*repaid*" by a seat in the cabinet, as soon as the latter could get into it himself. In pursuing this calumny, the slave observes, that "*since the failure of their negotiation in April, Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville have exercised every species of aggressive and unrelenting opposition against those ministers, who had been the objects of their primary recommendation;*" and, in another part of the pamphlet, a hope is expressed, that Lord Grenville will "*release Mr. Pitt from an unprofitable contract,*" which militates against the return of the latter to power! Never was there a statement, never were there insinuations, so replete with falsehood and malice! For, *first*, Lord Grenville (and this statement applies also to Lord Spencer and Mr. Windham) never had any thing to do in the "*recommending*" of Mr. Addington or his colleagues; who, on the contrary, had, as I have before stated, actually accepted of his office, and signified his acceptance in more than one quarter, *before* Lord Grenville was informed, that such an appointment was in the contemplation of any person living. *Secondly*, as to the "*contract*" made between Lord Grenville and Mr. Pitt and "*their negotiation*" in April last, Lord Grenville never was consulted, by Mr. Pitt or any other person, on the subject of that

negotiation; nor did his Lordship ever, either directly or indirectly, signify either *his wish, or his consent*, to make part of the proposed cabinet; and, in short, he had nothing at all to do with the negotiation. If these are facts (and that they are I am sure neither Mr. Addington nor Mr. Long will deny,) the public will be at a loss to determine, which is the greatest calumniator, the writer who has represented Lord Grenville as a *party in the negotiation of April last*, or he who has left his readers to conclude that this accusation is *unanswerable*.

(To be continued.)

SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF VICE.

SIR,—That an attack upon a "Society established for the Suppression of Vice," and consisting of thirteen hundred persons of "the first rank, and most solid piety and talents in the kingdom," should have been suffered to pass unnoticed was hardly to be supposed; and though some expected to see a champion of gigantic strength step forth and take up the gauntlet of defiance, I confess that I am not disappointed in seeing a combatant of more enthusiasm than strength, and of more zeal than skill, enter the lists as your adversary. Against the character of Mr. Henry Grimston, and, indeed, of almost all his fellows, I have not one single word to urge: it is true, that I know very little of the gentlemen who compose the society, but even the partial knowledge which I possess, would justify an eulogium more flattering than that pronounced by their defender. To the honesty of their intentions, and to the purity of their views, I bear ample and willing testimony; but I regret that their piety should have given their talents such a direction as, by rendering the laws oppressive, will make them odious, and by assuming the office of tyrants, will make themselves detested. Their reverence for religion, and their attachment to the monarchy, I applaud, but I lament to see them pursuing plans injurious to the interests of both, and adopting means which, so far from aiding in the suppression of vice, will only make its influence more extensive. I deplore with them the prevalence of immoral and vicious practices, both among the high and among the low, and will even admit the degeneracy of the times, by acknowledging "our morality to be at a lower point than that of our fathers;" but I fear that while there are so many philanthropic institutions for making the lower class of people base by maintaining them in idleness; so many charitable seminaries for teaching those to read profane and licentious books, who were for-

merly taught to work; so many hospitals, asylums, and Magdalens for encouraging fornication, by supporting bastards, and maintaining worn-out prostitutes, as the King maintains his worn-out soldiers and sailors; I fear that whilst these exist, and a thousand other institutions equally pernicious to the cause of religion and the welfare of the state, that the exertions of a society like this will have but little effect in meliorating the morals or the manners of the country. I regret as sincerely as any member of the committee, the "increase of infidelity," but I do not believe that the efforts of a society, which punishes trivial offences with more than puritanical intolerance, will contribute much to the propagation of the mild doctrines of Christianity. I feel as grateful as any Englishman, to "Divine Providence, for that benevolent protection which it has afforded to the sacred fabric of our church and monarchy;" and if that venerable fabric is still to be supported, I trust that Providence will continue to prosper the endeavours of those to whose care it has been committed; but if this protection be withdrawn, I should place but little reliance upon that of the Society for the Suppression of Vice.—Admitting the state of society to be as bad as any orator in the King-street committee room has ever represented it, I see no possible advantage from "such an association and for such purposes" as this. What? says Mr. Grimston, "when every thing is in association against religion and morality, is not a thing to associate for its support?" And is there then nothing in all this mighty kingdom, associated for the support of religion and morality, but the Society for the Suppression of Vice? Where is the King, "the Lord's anointed," "the Vicegerent of God?" Where is his parliament, where are his magistrates, and where are the bishops and the clergy of the church of England? Where are all these? Are these nothing? Are they so powerless that the support which they might give to religion and morality would be ineffectual; or are they so abandoned to all sense of duty as to be inattentive to the progress of immorality and irreligion; or are they also associated in their favour? Is it thus that this society is to be defended? Does its justification consist in representing all those whom we have ever considered great, reverend and sacred, as weak, profligate or abandoned? If the civil and ecclesiastical authorities which have been so long established, and which have so long preserved the state, be adequate to the maintenance of good morals, there can be no necessity for this society; but if vice be

so powerful as to break down the barriers which they are able to oppose, then, indeed, is the condition of the country hopeless; for it can scarcely be supposed that this society, however high the rank, and however solid the piety and talents of its members, will be able to effect that, for which the united exertions of the King, the parliament, the magistrates, the bishops and the clergy are insufficient.—For a long series of the most glorious years, England flourished without the aid of any such societies, or indeed of any other societies than those which were authorized, sanctioned, or acknowledged by the laws; and if the people are more dissolute and vicious now than formerly, the change is no great proof of the advantage of modern innovations on the customs of antiquity. Mr. Grimston would make us believe that "to such associations as this, half the venerable institutions of the world owe not only their original birth, but their permanence to the present time," and in support of this opinion, from which I totally dissent, he adduces, as instances, the league of Smalkald for the maintenance of the Protestant religion, concluded in the year 1531, between the Protestant princes of Europe; and the association at the Crown and Anchor, formed at the commencement of the late war, for preserving liberty and property. Nothing can be more dissimilar than these two instances; and nothing can be more unfair than this attempt to confound the nature of a solemn, legal, formal and official compact between several sovereign states; for the accomplishment of a great national object, and that of an unauthorized combination of private individuals, in a manner unknown to the law, and contrary to the spirit of the constitution of the state to which they were subject. I will not impute this unfairness on the part of your adversary to any wish he entertains of taking an undue advantage in the contest, but to his ignorance of the weapon with which he combats. He thinks this both argument and proof. An association is, with him, an association, whether it be among kings or among subjects; and, here, the objects of both being, in his opinion, good, he sees no difference between the league of Smalkald and that of the Crown and Anchor. That the success of a league between the princes of Europe can be no argument in favor of the success of an association among the subjects of the King of Great Britain, must, I think, be evident; but as Mr. Grimston has thought proper to infer the utility of the Society for the Suppression of Vice from the utility of the loyal association, I beg leave

to state my utter disbelief in the utility of either. For the gentlemen who formed the association I entertain great respect, and for some of them a warm friendship; and although I always commended the spirit with which they associated, I never doubted the impolicy of their union. That "they saved the constitution," I deny. That the constitution of England, that is the religion, the laws, and the established usages of the realm, was never in danger, I will not assert, but I believe it to be too dear to the loyal hearts of the nobility, the clergy, and the gentry, ever to be overthrown by a discontented and factious mob; and I confess that my veneration would give place to contempt, if I thought it such a thing as to owe its existence to the distribution of a few thousand farthing placards among the populace. If the proud constitution of this kingdom ever perishes, it will owe its fall not to the machinations of "republicans and levellers," but to the folly of the great, who lend the influence of their names and fortunes to the maintenance and support of those institutions, which, while they appear to administer nourishment, pour in the poisonous draughts of death.—Of all self-created societies, clubs, institutions, &c. &c. &c. of every kind and sort, be they formed for what purposes they may, I must express my decided disapprobation. They are, at all times, dangerous; and though the early prospects of many have been favourable, the ultimate consequences of all have ever been pernicious. In looking round among the heterogeneous mass to which the fecundity of this age of reformation and improvement has given birth, I see none which are not pregnant with mischiefs. Whether they are established for the physical or the moral, the political, or the religious improvement of man, they contain within themselves the germs of evil, and their course tends, certainly, finally more to the misery than to the happiness of general society. Every such institution is a sort of petty republic, subordinate to the state, it is true, but having its own distinct interests and views, and governed by its own laws, and acting silently, but often powerfully, upon the rest of society, and upon the state, as a corporate body. Its informal character makes it, in a measure, invisible and intangible, and though the blow which it strikes is often felt, the arm by which it is directed is never seen. The power which it possesses is either stolen from the authority of the state, by whom all power for the accomplishment of any purpose of public benefit ought to be possessed, or taken from that which the

members, in their individual capacities owe to the state. Every member possesses a double weight in society; for besides that which the constitution gives him as a subject of the realm, he has also that which he derives from the incorporated power of his confraternity. In proportion, too, as the object of his society, which is generally something within the scope of his mind, is dear to him, he becomes interested in its success, and indifferent to his country; and whenever the interests of the two clash, it cannot be expected that he should sacrifice that of the one, in which, though not a king, he is at least a legislator, to that of the other in which he is no more than one of the ignoble million. Besides weakening the love of country, which is thus rendered only a secondary object, these societies virtually affect, and perhaps, in some measure, change the constitution of the kingdom; for Parliament is thus legislating to a thousand petty states, and the laws which they enact are not to be executed among the liege subjects of the King, but among the members of whig clubs, and loyal associations, corresponding societies, and societies for the suppression of vice.—Without extending my observations, at this time, on the pernicious effects of these societies in general, which, if occasion should offer, may be the subject of a future paper, I will advert more particularly to the Society for the Suppression of Vice.—The principle upon which this society is founded is a detestation of vice. This holy hatred extends to immorality, irreligion, and wickedness in all their forms, but especially to those which they assume among the low and the ignorant; and as it would not have been wise in those who compose the association to assume the stations of legislators, and make laws for the moral government of that part of the community, they have contented themselves with acting as expounders and executors of such laws, as will, in any degree, effectuate their purposes; and that no offender may escape punishment, have spread themselves throughout the kingdom, and have taken upon them the offices of spies and beadles, lest the gaoler should be idle, or the hangman unemployed. It is true that this society enacts no new laws, in which new crimes are defined, and new punishments devised, but by applying those which exist to cases for which they were never intended, and executing even the very letter of them, with a rigour which was never contemplated, they have given them such an undue extension, that they operate upon the community, to all intents and purposes, as new statutes of

their own making: and as they only give this painful extension to such as suit their own views, and arm with this extraordinary severity such as promote their own objects, while all others are suffered to operate in the ordinary course, they perform the functions of a legislative body: thus a virtual distinction exists between such laws as have been merely passed by the Parliament, and those which have been sanctioned by the Society for the Suppression of Vice; and thus the mild and just code of British jurisprudence, when adopted and sanctioned by that Society, is at once transformed into the merciless and intolerant code of puritanical bigotry.—The laws of England were established for the punishment of such offences as tended to the injury of the peace and happiness of society; but not for those trivial irregularities of manners, to which all societies must, from the nature of man, be subject. To soften and correct these is, as has been before observed, the province of religion and its ministers; but to call in the civil power to suppress them, would be to make punishments so frequent, and multiply the business of police so much, as to destroy all distinctions between vices and crimes, and frustrate the grand object of government. When these irregularities grow to a pernicious excess, they become criminal, and, therefore, proper objects for legal interference. But when the legislature passed laws for the suppression of riotous and disorderly houses, for punishing cruelty to animals, and for preventing the profanation of the Sabbath, it never supposed, that there would ever exist a Society, which would send a spy at the skirt of every fiddler, to every house, where those who preferred the sprightliness of a dance to the groans of a conventicle, had met to make merry with their sweet-hearts; which would dispatch an emissary to every field, where those who had a greater relish for manly sport than for ale-house politics, had collected to witness a bull-bait; and who would station an informer at the elbow of every tapster, to count the number of pots he drew on Sundays, from forty-five minutes after ten to forty-five minutes before one; and that upon the evidence of these hireling agents, those unfortunate culprits were subjected to persecutions, fines, and imprisonments. If the legislature had foreseen all this, their statutes would most assuredly have not been what we find them; and if such societies are permitted to exist much longer, the most forbearing and the most patient will cry out for laws less severe and less oppressive. Before the establishment of any such institutions, the laws though lenient and equitable, were found to be fully

adequate to the suppression of all offences injurious to the peace and happiness of society, and the magistrates were found sufficiently zealous and powerful to enforce their execution in a mild but salutary manner, without the aid of spies and informers. It was supposed, and indeed it is the very principle, upon which all penal laws, but particularly those relative to the morals and manners of the country, are made, that whenever the conduct of a man was destructive to the peace and order of the community, there would be some overt act cognizable by the law. It was the intention of the law to punish evil doers, but it was supposed that if a man were bad, his neighbours would not be ignorant of his crimes, and that knowing them they might always expose them to the eye of justice. For the offences which a man committed secretly, he was left to account with his conscience and his God; but now the more private the evil, the greater the necessity for discovering it, and the more deeply burrowed the iniquity, to use the phrase of Mr. Grimston, the stronger the inducements for dragging it forth; and if it were possible for any vice to exist, which had never yet made its appearance, the more eager would be the zeal of these enemies of all vice to bring it to public view. I am not attempting to screen the wicked man from punishment, but if his wickedness does not show itself in overt acts, cognizable by the spirit of the law, let spiritual admonitions be offered by his pastor, for "men are not to be prosecuted into piety;" and I am fully convinced that sending spies into the little circle where his wickedness is apparent, to drag before the tribunal of public justice the father of a family, will have very little effect in reforming the son whom his example may have corrupted, and that to see punishment inflicted will tend more to make him think the law oppressive than the parent criminal.—If justice was so well administered formerly, without the aid of any self-created, unofficial body, where, I ask, is the necessity of such an one now? Has vice become so mighty that the laws which, then answered so well, would be inefficient in the present state of society, if left to their ordinary operations? If so, a parliament still sits at Westminster, able and willing to enact others. Have the magistrates become so inattentive to their duties as to pay no regard to that constant violation of the laws, which Mr. Grimston thinks so universal? If so, let them be displaced, that others of more zeal and energy may fill their offices. Or

have the people become so refractory and so rebellious, that, notwithstanding all the efforts of the magistracy, they are unable to controul them? If so, the King will endow them with greater powers. If there be a real necessity for any extraordinary measures, let them be taken by the lawful authorities, whom the people will reverence and obey, and not by the Society for the Suppression of Vice, or by any other illegal association of unknown and unauthorised individuals, whose interference they would despise, and whose sway they would disdain.—With the most zealous good-will towards the Church and the Monarchy, this society is robbing each of its power, and sapping the stability of both; and with the most sincere wishes for the happiness of the community, it is imposing upon it a most grievous tyranny. I have already shewn how it has usurped, from parliament, part of the legislative, and from the magistracy, part of the executive, functions, of these two members of the State; but its usurpations of the functions of the Church have been no less open and direct.—The piety, the loyalty, and the zeal of the British clergy are well known; and their great and unremitted exertions in the cause of the holy religion which they teach, one might have supposed, would have exempted them from the general censure of this pious institution. But no: the same neglect of duty which called for their attention to the affairs of the State, requires their interference in those of religion, and as they had not spared the civil authorities, they would not spare the ecclesiastical. A remarkable instance of this interference occurred a few months ago, and I was pleased with the just and spirited observations which were made upon it by a writer in your Register.* A circular letter was sent to the clergy of the different parishes, stating that the Rev. Mr. Rush, minister of Chelsea, together with his two church-wardens, Messrs. Stidder and Feltham, had addressed to their parishioners, “An Admonition respecting the Profanation of the Lord’s Day, which admonition the Society hopes will serve as an example to the ministers and church-wardens of every parish in the kingdom;” thereby impudently insinuating that the clergy do not know or do not perform thier duty—Really, when I see such unblushing insolence,

* See page 528 of Vol. IV. for a letter signed by “a beneficed Clergyman,” in which the subject is so well treated, that very little more can be said.

I am almost tempted to suspect the purity of the intentions of this society. What member of the established church is there who does not feel indignant at the slanderous insinuation; who does not feel indignant at the insult offered both to the bishops and the clergy, by a club of laymen, who assume the functions of the sacerdotal office, and write pastoral letters to the clergy; and who does not feel indignant at the audacity of their attempt to associate the clergy with their profligate band of spies and informers, in the promotion of their views and projects? Is there nothing sacred enough to be protected from their calumnies? Is there nothing which can escape their meddling hands? Does their “grand design, to promote a general reformation,” embrace the church as well as the state and the community at large?—Whether I consider the purposes for which this society has been formed, or the means by which these purposes are to be effected, I equally dread the consequences of its intermeddling propensities. “It has been found necessary,” says Mr. Grimston, “to employ under agents to discover the practices which it professes to supervise and correct.” These “under agents” are neither more nor less than common informers, men, who are necessarily taken from among the most unprincipled and abandoned of profligates, and whose duty it is to penetrate every where, and search every place for the detection of vice and immorality, and to drag the offenders to punishment; for which offices they are liberally paid by the society. To the proper execution of the laws, I think that I have already proved persons of that sort to be totally unnecessary; and I think the employment of them must so evidently tend to the debasement of the morals of the people, by the example of a Christian Society thus upholding and encouraging men, who are notoriously infamous, that it is scarcely necessary to bring any arguments to establish the immorality and iniquity of employing them. And here I cannot help rejoicing that the funds of the society are inadequate to their maintenance, for were it not so, the zeal of its members would station one of these vile reptiles in every house in the kingdom, and thus establish an inquisition more terrible than any with which the world has been cursed.—In addition to the pain, the vexation and the expense, which one of these informers may at any time throw upon any person towards whom, either himself or his patrons entertain any animosity, is the great injustice which a person accused by him is likely to experience in the courts of law. When it is known that several of the magistrates

and police officers of the metropolis are members of this confraternity, and, consequently, committed to each other, for the promotion of its interests, what justice can a person accused by its agents expect from a judge, by whom the merits of his cause have been previously tried and decided, at another tribunal, held perhaps in the committee room in King-street? And when it is recollected that on every jury in London there may be some member of this society, can a fair and unbiassed verdict be given by him, at whose instigation, perhaps, the criminal at the bar was prosecuted, and by whose commands the evidence upon which he is accused has been given? Are not the accusers and the judges virtually the same; and can just decisions be expected from a tribunal thus constituted?—These are questions involving matters of importance; and it would be well for those magistrates who are members of this association to inquire how far the duties of their two characters are compatible:—Upon this branch of the subject I should have wished to say much; and, indeed, upon the subject, generally, much remains to be said, but I have already engrossed so much of your sheet, that I must defer all further remarks, until some future opportunity.—I am, Sir, &c. &c.

ANTI-PURITAN.

Westminster, Jan. 25, 1804.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

AMERICA.—The latest advices from the United States seem to assure us, that the Americans will not gain possession of New Orleans without *force*; but, there is but little probability of the Spaniards being able to resist them. The Floridas are, too, to be obtained by the Americans, either by purchase, or by *conquest*; and then all the observations which were made respecting the danger, which would arise to England from France having the command of the gulph stream, will apply to the possession of the Floridas by the Americans, on whose back Lord Hawkesbury thought he was placing the French, and by which means he said the United States would be attached more closely to Great Britain! "Fine young man!" as the stock-jobbers called him! This fine young man is, it is much to be feared, destined to see the last of the British monarchy.

AUSTRIA AND BAVARIA.—It is stated, from a source of great respectability, that Mr. Otto, French minister at Munich, has officially declared to the Elector, that the First Consul is very much displeased at the

conduct of the Elector towards the Emperor, in the late dispute between them; that he expects his Imperial Majesty will take measures to inflict on him a suitable punishment, and that, in the mean time, he, the First Consul, will *march a few regiments* into the neighbourhood of the electorate? This threat, it is added, has caused much more uneasiness at Vienna than at Munich. What object the Consul has in view is not known; and, indeed, it is more than probable, that he has seized on this opportunity merely to remind the states of Germany that they are his vassals; a little stir that he has made amongst them, just to examine their chains and keep them from rusting.

RUSSIA.—More stories are afloat relative to the interference of this power for the restoration of peace. Such reports are absurd. It is not the interest of Russia to interfere, until we are reduced so low as to be ready to yield Malta, upon the terms which France required us to yield it, previous to the war. When that time comes, and it may not be far distant, Russia will afford us her *good offices*; and, if we should not *destroy ourselves* before, we may, perhaps, obtain peace, after having added another hundred millions to the national debt, without obtaining the least earthly good, and with having undeniably proved, that we are unable to contend against France.

SPAIN.—It is said, that we are about to declare war against this nation, but it is also said, that we are, on the contrary, endeavouring to obtain its *mediation for peace*. In short, the public can know nothing of this matter; but, from the rise in the funds, one might naturally expect, that some project for peace was on foot. The objection to it will not be found with the ministers, who know not how to get on an inch further in war, and who, if they think it likely to prevent a formidable opposition in parliament, will most assuredly make peace, if they can. As to *terms*, they know well, that they need not embarrass themselves; for, as they have already experienced, there are none that even Buonaparté can dictate, which the base stock-jobbers and those who speak for them will not approve of. The mediation of Spain!!! But, why not? The last negotiation was begun by His Majesty's principal Secretary of State soliciting an interview with a Commissary of Prisoners. Why not the mediation of Spain? What are we better than Spain? We do not, indeed, *yet* pay tribute *directly*; but, we do it indirectly, and that too, in *larger sums* than Spain has ever paid. We are, and long have been, sinking under the yoke without perceiving it; and, indeed,

their ignorance of our situation is the only circumstance that can apologize for the contempt, with which we treat those whom we call "the debased and abject powers of the continent;" contempt which is, by those powers, most amply repaid us, notwithstanding we have to *boast* of not having yet been conquered by France.

DOLLARS.—I mean, at this time, merely to remind my readers, that the intrinsic sterling value of the Spanish dollar is 4s. 6d. After the stoppage of the bank, in 1797, the dollar rose to 4s. 9d. and now it has risen to 5s. Some of the sapient advocates of the funding system insist, that this rise in the value of the dollar argues an *increase* in the stability of the bank! Good souls! it were a cruelty to undeceive them, or one might ask, whether, if dollars are of just the same weight and metal as formerly, and if a ten pound note, which used to buy 44 dollars, will now buy only 40 dollars; one might ask whether, if this be so, it is not a sign that *the bank notes have depreciated*; but, as was before observed, it would be an act of cruelty to undeceive the good souls, whose happiness, like that of the lamb or the calf, consists in their total ignorance of the fate that awaits them. "Pleased to the last, they crop the flow'ry food,"... I will not add the remaining part of the sentence, lest the haunters of the 'Change should think that I have knowledge of some conspiracy against their corporeal existence, which most surely is not the case.

VOLUNTEER SYSTEM.—With the words, which form the motto to the present number, Mr. Windham concluded his exhortations to the parliament on this interesting subject. How the ministers, after all the abuse, which they and their underlings have heaped upon him; after all their gibes and taunts and reproaches and misrepresentations and calumnies and insults; how, after all these, the ministers will be able to look him in the face, it is hard to conceive. Yet they will look him in the face, and boldly too; for, as Mr. Secretary Yorke so truly and so modestly observed, in the debate of the 9th of December last, though there may be "many *excellent opposition* speeches, there "will be, to set off against them, many "good ministerial votes." Nay, it is not altogether impossible but they may, upon the strength of these their votes, become the assailants, and, instead of allowing that their volunteer system was an unwise measure, insist, that, like the peace of Amiens, it was admirable in itself, till it was spoiled by the incessant attacks of Mr. Windham, who, in both instances, first predicted evil conse-

quences and then *produced* them, and whose foresight has, therefore, no more merit than that of the incendiary, who foretold the burning of the house which he afterwards set on fire. In preferring a charge like this, it will, indeed, remain for them to apologize for their not having perceived the intention of Mr. Windham, or, perceiving, not having prevented its success; but, this difficulty, too, they will get over by their standing justification, to wit, a dead majority of votes.—This majority will not, however, prevent the evils of the system from daily and hourly augmenting. The disputes in the several corps of volunteers increase in violence as well as number. Instances of mutiny occur continually. A regiment not far from the metropolis, which consists of eight *divisions*, each division having a committee, has lately formed a general committee, which committee has drawn up and promulgated some very harsh resolutions respecting their officers. At Yarmouth the newspapers tell us, that the corps is thrown all into confusion by the measures of the commanding officer having been opposed by *the committee*. In a county, in the North, a whole corps are staid to have laid down their arms, because they were not permitted to take the right of the line on a *brigading* day, one of Mr. Pitt's favourite brigading days! Mr. Pitt never had heard of Volunteer committees, till Mr. Windham mentioned them. Colonel Long, who is "a More Accurate Observer," can tell him a good deal about them; and can furnish him with some as pretty instances of the discipline of his shop keeper army as he can possibly wish to be put in possession of. In the midst of all this, and while the magistrates and parish officers are, in many places, disputing about the allowances to be made to the wives and children of volunteers, who consent to go from home, the public prints are treating us with a speech of Robert Sparrow, Esq. chairman of the quarter sessions of the county of Stafford, who is said to have threatened with an indictment for a *misdemeanor* all those farmers and gentlemen, who "throw any obstacle "in the way of the defence of the country," by refusing to permit their servants to go a volunteering, or by refusing to *keep* or to *hire* volunteers! This is, surely, an invention for the purpose of hoaxing Mr. Colonel Erskine, who so learnedly accused Mr. Windham of uttering against the volunteer system, words, which, if used out of the House of Commons would amount to a *misdemeanor*; and in Robert Sparrow, Esq. every one must recognize Falstaff's Robert Shallow, Esq. who had formerly lived in Lin-

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coln's Inn, and who, as the reader will remember was famous for talking about the *new levies*, and was by no means backward in talking *about himself*. But, really, if there be, in Staffordshire, a leading magistrate of the name of Robert Sparrow, to make use of his name in this way was certainly going beyond the licence of the press; for, there can be no doubt, that a man who should *seriously* utter the threat above mentioned, would be much fitter for Bedlam than for the Bench.—Citizen Colonel Tierney's third company have published another set of resolutions; in which they give a positive contradiction to the no less positive assertion made by that gallant and right honourable man, that he had "told his corps that they "were not, in future to elect their officers." They, at the same time, express no intention of giving up this their "elective franchise;" but, they are, for the *good of the country*, ready to *pardon* the harsh treatment they have received. There has since been a quarrel between Mr. Tierney's associate Lieut. Colonel and one of the captains; and, we are informed, that the *men* of the company, to which the captain belongs, have had a meeting upon the subject, have taken their captain's conduct into consideration, and have determined, by an "*unanimous vote*," that the captain had behaved well, through the whole of the transaction! —Mr. Dowley, whose goods were distrained and sold for the payment of fines, has marched into Westminster Hall, there, under the command of that able field officer Colonel Erskine, to fight against the magistrates of Southwark, headed by the Attorney General. What a glorious prospect for the law! Who would have thought, that the parliament, by one short act, could have created, instantly, 370,000 litigants, in Great-Britain alone! What immense sums will thus be brought into the Stamp-Office! What a great and unexpected addition will thus be made to those "*magnificent receipts*," on which Lord Auckland dwelt with such rapture! And how would Mr. Windham be baffled, if the minister were, at last, openly to avow, and to boast of, the success of the volunteer institution, not as a military system, but as "*a solid system of finance*!" —At Chester, a *regimental court of inquiry* has been held, on the *royal* volunteers of that city; and, the ministers have *advertised*, in the London Gazette, a reward of 100l. for *discovering* the persons who broke open the jail and effected the rescue, at Chester, on the 28th of December last! So, so! This

is the turn it is to take, at last! An advertisement to *discover* who it was that broke open the jail and rescued the impressed volunteer and carried him through the streets of the city! *This* is the way the matter is to be stifled, is it? The Addingtons and Hawkesburys will smile. Let them: it were cruel to disturb mirth which is likely to be of so short a duration.—It must not be supposed, that, from my having mentioned the above circumstances, I am inclined to take part *against* the volunteers, for whom, I repeat, that I have, *personally*, very great respect. Where, indeed, is the probability, that I should dislike or condemn 370,000 of my own countrymen, amongst whom are almost all the persons, to whom I am most attached, as well by friendship as by interest? What reason can there be, then, for my personally disliking this numerous body of men, from no one of whom, as far as I know, did I ever receive an injury or an insult! No; my objection is not to the volunteers themselves, but to *the system*, by which their means, their time, their talents, their zeal, and their courage, are prevented from being of any use to their country or themselves. As to the dispute between the government and the volunteers, I am decidedly with the latter. I never could find the *law*, on which the opinion of the Attorney-General was founded; and, I am not a little pleased to find, that, after all the abuse, which has been bestowed on me by the slaves of the ministry, those slaves have now adopted my opinion. As to the *right of electing officers*, there can be little doubt, that there are some cases, in which the *offers of service* included a *positive stipulation* for the exercise of this right. This was a fact, of which I was not before aware. But, now that I am in possession of it, I hesitate not to say, that, to attempt to enforce a regulation contrary to such stipulation, would be a shameful breach of national faith. The Attorney General, in the debate of the 12th of December, in replying to what Mr. Windham had said about the making of officers, observed, that "*generally speaking, men of rank and character were the object of CHOICE with the volunteer corps*;" words which he could hardly have made use of, if he had not regarded *all* the volunteers as having a *right to choose their own officer*. And with respect to *committees*, upon looking into the acts, I find that volunteer committees and meetings and votings are fully *sanctioned by law*, though Mr. Pitt and the ministers affected to be *utterly astonished* at the existence o

any such things; and the "*right honourable*" Mr. Hiley Addington went so far as to declare, that he would *scorn* to belong to a corps that had a committee!

ST. DOMINGO.—The French troops in St. Domingo, consisting, it is stated, of 5,000 men, have surrendered to the British squadron, and have been conveyed to Jamaica, together with their general, Rochambeau. Four French frigates, 2 corvettes, and 18 merchantment were captured, at the same time, in the harbour of Cape François, at which place the troops surrendered.—Now comes the dreadful "*black empire*!" Will Mr. Addington and Lord Castlereagh *boast* of this event? Yes; they will. The assurance of your *modest well-meaning men* is never to be disconcerted.

INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.—It has been reported, upon the authority of some letters from Vienna, of a recent date, that a disturbance had broken out in Constantinople, caused by the co-operation of a body of rebels from Rometia, with a party of the disaffected in the capital: the janissaries, however, remained faithful to their allegiance, and, after considerable slaughter, succeeded in driving the insurgents from the city; but, it is said, that they are still hovering in the neighbourhood.—The Grand Seignior, embarrassed by the disturbances at home, and convinced of the difficulty, if not the impossibility of reducing Egypt to submission, has, it appears, dispatched orders for the surrender of Alexandria, and for the evacuation of that country; and has made overtures to the Beys, for the restoration of the ancient state of things.—The dispute between the Emperor of Germany and the Elector of Bavaria has not yet been comprised, although many members of the Equestrian order of Franconia, have submitted, and taken the oath to the Elector: and during this suspense, the Austrian army, under Prince Lichtenstein remains upon the frontiers of Bavaria.—The preponderance of the Catholic interest, in the College of Princes, is not settled; but, it seems, that the Elector of Bavaria has agreed to support it, on condition that he, as well as the Emperor, shall receive an accession of influence.—On the 31st of December, Buonaparté left Paris, on a visit to the coast; and, after having inspected the preparations at Boulogne, and the adjacent places, with great minuteness, he returned to the capital on the 6th of

January; on which day, the session of the Legislative Body was opened by a speech from the Minister of the Interior, in which he boasts of the great improvements carrying on in the country, notwithstanding the immense preparations for war, and of the prosperity, the happiness, and the tranquillity of the republic.—Batavia is represented to be in a deplorable condition, in consequence of the great pecuniary exactions made upon the monied part of the community, for the support of the armies which are stationed throughout the country, and in consequence of the daily requisitions made among the lower classes, for men and boats to be employed in the expedition against England.—News had been lately received from St. Domingo, by the way of America, stating, that Cape François had been evacuated by the French, and that the event had been celebrated, with great rejoicings, among the negroes; that at the different ports of which they had taken possession, commerce had begun to revive, and that at Fort Jeremie, particularly, trade was carried on with great spirit.—Peace has, certainly been restored, between the United States and the Emperor of Morocco, without any stipulation for the payment of any tribute whatever. During the negotiation, the American squadron was moored off Tangiers, where the Emperor was with a very large body of troops, and the commodore threatened to destroy the town, unless the terms he offered were accepted.

DOMESTIC.—Late Dublin papers stated that Dwyer the noted chief, had undergone several long examinations previous to his being sent out of the country; that the rebel general, Clarke, who was wounded in attempting to make his escape, had died; and that Mernagh, another famous leader, had surrendered himself prisoner.—The people of the Shetland Islands are suffering under a severe famine, in consequence of the failure of their crops of last year, and the scanty produce of their fisheries; indeed, so great and so universal is said to be the scarcity which prevails, that unless some assistance be obtained, one-half of the inhabitants will be in danger of perishing for want.

✍ The articles which have been transmitted for the Register, and which it is intended to insert, will certainly be found in the next sheet.